

Original paper
UDC 821.163.42.09 Ferić, Đ.
821.124(497.5).09 Ferić, Đ.

GJURO FERRICH'S *PERIEGESIS ORAE RHACUSANAE* (1803) AS A TRAVEL POLEMIC

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ABSTRACT: Gjuro Ferrich's *Periegesis orae Rhacusanae* (1803) has been read as a description of Ragusa's territories, as a sarcastic commentary on Ragusan manners and morals, and as a poetic paraphrase of physiocratic ideas. Now a hitherto unstudied letter from the author suggests that it should also be read as a 'counter-travelogue', a polemical reply to a foreign account of Ragusa. This study sets Ferrich's *Periegesis* in context, examining its relationship to Francesco Maria Appendini's *Notizie* (1802-03); the different models Ferrich may have drawn upon in framing his text; and the insights into particular images provided by a polemical reply to Ferrich composed by Marin Zlatarić. Ferrich's *Periegesis* emerges as a 'discreet' polemic, with different messages addressed to its domestic readers on the one hand and its foreign audience on the other.

Keywords: Đuro Ferić, Marin Zlatarić, travel polemics, counter-travelogue, transnational cultural exchange.

In 1803 Gjuro Ferrich [or Đuro Ferić in modern Croatian], a Ragusan secular clergyman and Latinist, published a long travel poem in Latin hexameter. In this *Periegesis orae Rhacusanae*, or *Description of the coast of Ragusa*, he recounts the places, people, customs, history and natural beauty of the territory of the Republic of Ragusa as seen or heard in the course of his excursions. Since its publication, Ferrich's work has been used by travellers and historians

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as a guide and a source book. However, its merits as a literary work have been debated, some dismissing it as uneven, others praising its 'grand scale' (despite it being confined to the territory of the diminutive Republic).¹ The author's purpose in writing it has been equally disputed: is it merely descriptive and informative, or does it conceal a more critical message? Now a hitherto unknown document casts a new light on the *Periegesis*. In a letter to a friend, Ferrich describes the poem as a rebuttal of one of the best known contemporary accounts of Ragusa's history and culture, Appendini's *Notizie storico-critiche sulle antichità, storia e letteratura de' Ragusei* (1802-03). This raises some questions about the *Periegesis*'s relations to its intertext, but perhaps more importantly, allows us to place the work in its wider context as a polemical counter-travelogue. Like other contemporary examples of the genre, Ferrich's travelogue is not simply a literary exercise but a political intervention, one that was intended to speak both to his compatriots and to an international audience. And indeed, responses to the *Periegesis*, including a satire by a fellow Ragusan, Marin Zlatarich [Marin Zlatarić], show that Ferrich's work did provoke a reaction.

Gjuro Ferrich (1739-1820), born to a plebeian family from a village on the territory of the Republic, had been educated in Ragusa's Jesuit *Collegium* and subsequently studied theology and philosophy in Loreto before returning to serve as a diocesan priest in Ragusa, where he was also employed as a teacher of Latin grammar, rhetoric and literature. By 1803 he was already well known as a Latinist and a scholar with an interest in local folklore, with an international reputation for his more conventional pedagogical-didactic works.² Scholarly studies have centred on his contribution to a wider European interest in the collection of South Slav folk literature, though often criticizing him for showing

¹ László Sziklay, »Les genres en vers dans les littératures de langues européennes entre les Lumières et le Romantisme«, in: *Le tournant du siècle des lumières, 1760-1820*, ed. György M. Vajda. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1982: p. 234.

² They include a Latin paraphrase of the Psalms, *Paraphrasis psalmorum poetica* (Ragusae: Typis Andreae Trevisan, 1791; Zagrabiae: Typis Novoszelianis, 1796); a collection of original fables elaborating on popular proverbs, *Fabulae ab Illyricis adagiis desumptae* (Rhacusae: apud Andream Trevisani, 1794); several poetic epistles treating South Slav oral poetry, *Ad clarissimum virum Joannem Müller epistola* (Ragusii: Andreas Trevisan, 1798) and *Ad clarissimum virum Julium Bajamontium Spalatensem epistola* (Ragusii: Andreas Trevisan, 1799), and the state of learning and national enlightenment in Dalmatia, *Epistola Michaeli Denisio Vindobonensi* (Vindobonae: s.n., 1798; revised ed. *Ad clarissimum virum Michaelem Denisium Vindelicum epistola*, Ragusii: Typis Antonii Martecchini, 1824).

off his mastery of Latin at the expense of the language and character of the original texts.³

His *Periegesis* was published in 1803 by the Martecchini press in Ragusa, which also published Appendini's *Notizie*. There is no record of an extant manuscript version, though parts may have circulated among his friends. Some of the sections that make up the main body of the poem were composed over a considerable period of time, as Ferrich himself commented in a footnote (*Periegesis*, xi), and there are occasional notes indicating changes since his verses were written, adding to the impression of a text written in instalments.

The poem marks a departure from his earlier translations, paraphrases and poetic epistles. The introductory *Carmen Prodromum* frames the poem as an unconventional travelogue. Ferrich begins by noting a recent fashion for travel writing about foreign lands. Some authors write down everything they have seen or heard, whether for love of praise or to distinguish themselves from the common mob; others seek to astonish their readers by reporting only novelties and wonders, avoiding anything commonplace; still other strive to lay bare the innermost workings of the world, even in the face of the marvellous; all these approaches have failed to achieve their hoped-for goal. Ferrich, however, plans to write in honour of his native land, contrasting his own love of *patria* to the love of praise that motivated the travellers he had just described. He proceeds, at the beginning of the first chapter of the poem, to list the topics he will treat: "the nature of the land and the situation of the places, the various turns of fortune, the noble deeds of my fathers, the customs of the people, and their vices" (v). This gives an accurate idea of the preoccupations of the account: economic geography, history, ethnography and moral standards. His *Periegesis* covers the length and breadth of the Republic of Ragusa, travelling though Ragusa's mainland territories in the first book and surveying its islands in the second, finally concluding with a *prosopopeia* in the voice of Ragusa itself. The poem is both a *periegesis* after the tradition of Pausanias, a description or a guide to a territory, but also a *hodoeporicon*, a travel poem in the neo-Latin tradition, though a rather late example of the genre.⁴

³ Đuro Ferić, *Slavica poematia Latine reddita*, ed. Gudrun Wirtz. Köln: Böhlau Verlag, 1997, the most recent study, reviews the relevant literature.

⁴ See Hermann Wiegand, *Hodoeporica: Studien zur neulateinischen Reisedichtung des deutschen Kulturraums im 16. Jahrhundert*. Baden-Baden: Koerner, 1984; Jozef Ijsewijn, *Companion to Neo-Latin Studies*. Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1998.

This work is generally acknowledged as Ferrich's most original composition, but it has been little discussed in any detail, largely being treated as a minor work of descriptive literature.⁵ Early Ragusan assessments of the work complained of Ferrich's outspokenness and sarcasm. Tomaso Chersa set this tone in the 'life and works' he published shortly after Ferrich's death, assessing the *Periegesis* as Ferrich's most substantial work, but his least appreciated. Chersa attributed this to its manner of composition, assembled in fits and starts as Ferrich visited various parts of the Republic, and insufficiently reworked to form a coherent whole; its style, which he thought lacking in attractive or poetic description; and its treatment of Ragusan 'customs and vices', which castigated wrongdoing, mocked peculiar customs, and lamented the loss of civic virtue—"things that would be better ignored than understood, and which no poetry could ennoble".⁶ The short biography by P. A. Casali in *Galleria di Ragusei illustri* (1841) also implied that the poem was disfigured by peevishness, citing Ferrich's intention to write in honour of his city, "a most sacred intention, but one which we do not believe was continually at the forefront of his mind". (Casali also thought he suffered from the class antagonism of a commoner who had risen through education but still found himself at the margins of the Ragusan elite).⁷ Subsequently, Ferrich's comments on Ragusan mores in the *Periegesis* were interpreted as the reaction of someone out of step with his own time, deploring the changes that were taking place around him.⁸ An exception to this approach comes from Ivan Pederin, one of the few modern scholars to treat the *Periegesis* in any detail, who interprets it as a poetic paraphrase of the physiocratic ideas circulating in eighteenth-century Dalmatian reformist circles, and as a coded critique of Ragusa's patrician rulers.⁹ This view has considerable merit in placing Ferrich in an ideological context that goes beyond reactionary irascibility. Ferrich was friendly with Dalmatian reformers, including Giovanni Lovrich [Ivan Lovrić], whose own domestic travel account, *Osservazioni sopra diversi*

⁵ E.g. Ivan Kasumović, »Dva originalna naša fabulista«. *Rad JAZU* 206 (1915): pp. 1-24; Željko Puratić, »Fabule i *Periegesis* Dorda Ferića«. *Radovi Filozofskog fakulteta u Sarajevu* 8 (1974-1975): pp. 259-284.

⁶ Tomaso Chersa, *Della vita e delle opere di monsignore Giorgio Ferrich*. Ragusa: per Antonio Martecchini, 1824: pp. 26-27.

⁷ P. A. Casali, »Giorgio Ferrich«, in: *Galleria di Ragusei illustri*. Ragusa: Pier-Francesco Martecchini, 1841: p. 3.

⁸ Josip Bersa, *Dubrovačke slike i prilike*. Zagreb: Matica hrvatska, 1941: pp. 107-108, 162-163.

⁹ Ivan Pederin, »Đuro Ferić kao pjesnik hrvatskih fiziokrata i jedan od začetnika hrvatskoga narodnog preporoda«. *Analiz Zavoda za povijesne znanosti Istraživačkog centra JAZU u Dubrovniku* 21 (1983): pp. 225-250.

pezzi del Viaggio in Dalmazia del signor abate Alberto Fortis (Venezia: presso Francesco Anboni, 1776), had elaborated a programme of agricultural and educational improvement for Dalmatia. What each locality produces (and sends to market in the city) is indeed one of the first things that Ferrich sees when he describes Ragusa's territories. But his *Periegesis* takes in far more than descriptions of agricultural labour, while having little to say about the need for rural reform or public intervention in the countryside. Drawing attention to his physiocratic perspectives is fair enough, but does not tell us much about the rest of his poem.

In short, existing assessments of the character of the *Periegesis* and its author leave important questions unanswered. The most obvious is: Why describe Ragusa's territories in a travel poem and why in Latin hexameter, at that? Most critics simply take Ferrich's choice of topic and form for granted: he wrote about Ragusa because it was a subject that he knew and he wrote in Latin verse because he could. Although Ferrich had only travelled abroad as far as Loreto, this interpretation goes, he had criss-crossed the territory of the Republic in his capacity of church *visitor*. Furthermore, Latin versification was a long-standing feature of the Jesuit programme of education in Ragusa, and it is clear that Ferrich had a particular predilection for the form (Chersa describes him as having a thirty-lines-a-day habit).¹⁰ But even granted his knowledge of his subject and his facility in Latin versification, this does not answer the question of *why* he wrote the *Periegesis*. Ivan Pederin argues that the text was addressed primarily to a narrow circle of local physiocrats and that Ferrich's choice of Latin verse was precautionary, intended to defend his views from official censorship.¹¹ It is true that Ferrich had some reason to be cautious, after being caught up in an official investigation of Ragusan 'Jacobins' (or more accurately, French sympathizers) in 1797.¹² However, the idea that he could express physiocratic ideas only in coded form ignores the satirical comments on Ragusan 'customs and vices' that alienated many of Ferrich's early readers. Why should he have disguised his opinions on agricultural economy, when he was so outspoken about the contemporary decline of civic virtue? The questions remain: to whom is the poem addressed? And what is it meant to achieve?

¹⁰ T. Chersa, *Della vita e delle opere di monsignore Giorgio Ferrich*: p. 36.

¹¹ I. Pederin, »Đuro Ferić kao pjesnik hrvatskih fiziokrata«: pp. 237, 248.

¹² Žarko Muljačić, »Istraga protiv jakobinaca 1797. god. u Dubrovniku«. *Anali Historijskog instituta JAZU u Dubrovniku* 12 (1953): pp. 235-252.

A hitherto unknown letter sent by Ferrich to a friend in Vienna, Stefan Raicevich [Stjepan Rajčević], Ragusan citizen and Habsburg imperial councillor, sheds light on Ferrich's intentions in writing the *Periegesis*. The letter is held in the Special Collections of the Amsterdam University Library as part of the Schenking-Diederichs collection of autographs, amassed in the mid-nineteenth century by the Dutch newspaper publisher P. A. Diederichs and given to the University Library in 1875 by his son.¹³ It probably formed part of Raicevich's papers, now scattered, but there is no evidence of its provenance or how it was acquired.¹⁴ It is dated Ragusa, 8 May 1804 and endorsed as received on 23 May that same year (see Appendix for the text).

In his letter, Ferrich informs his friend that he has sent him several copies of his *Periegesis*, and asks that he give one to Johannes von Müller, the Swiss historian and imperial librarian to whom Ferrich had addressed a poetic epistle some years earlier. He expresses himself curious as to what Raicevich will think, and asks for his opinion. But Ferrich cannot wait for his reaction, and plunges straight into an explanation of the poem's genesis. "Do you know what prompted me to compose it? The foreigner who has written our history and who has disfigured it in a manner which has cast into deeper shadow those matters which he pretended to illuminate. What is more, he has made a hash and a confusion of things which, along with the many lies which he has told, casts doubt on even that little truth which is found there, first because exaggerated to the highest degree, and then corrupted by stomach-turning praises". "The foreigner" as the letter goes on to make clear, was Francesco Maria Appendini, whose two-volume history of Ragusa had appeared in 1802-1803. Ferrich, wishing "to set something against his 2 vols. in quarto", describes his own *Periegesis* as a combination of history and travel account: "I have emphasized

¹³ UBA Special Collections, OTM hs. 119 Cd. On the history of the collection, see also *Catalogus der handschriften Schenking-Diederichs VI. Kleinere afdeelingen (Italië, Spanje, Portugal, Hongarije, Turkije, Griekenland, Indië, enz.)*. Amsterdam: De Bussy, 1917. My thanks to Alex Drace-Francis for arranging a copy, and to the Library for permission to reproduce it.

¹⁴ For Raicevich, see Frano Čale, »O Stjepanu Rajčeviću Dubrovčaninu«. *Zbornik Filozofskog fakulteta* 3 (1955): pp. 193-198. and Francesco Guida, »Un libro 'italiano' sui paesi romeni alla fine del settecento«, in: *Italia e Romania*, ed. Sante Graciotti. Florence: L.S. Olschki, 1998: pp. 344-365. Raicevich's letters and manuscripts seem to have been dispersed after his death; a manuscript copy of his study of the Ottoman Empire, perhaps that mentioned by Jeremy Bentham in his account of Raicevich (E. D. Tappe, »Bentham in Wallachia and Moldavia«. *Slavonic and East European Review* 29 (1950): pp. 66-76, here p. 68), formerly owned by the Orientalist Joseph Hammer-Purgstall (himself a one-time consul in Moldavia), was sold by Christie's to an unknown buyer in 2005 (*Lot 41: Valuable Printed Books and Manuscripts*, London, 8 June, 2005).

the main events from the first foundation right up to the present times, without having omitted any of the principal epochs. Then I have taken a look through all the places of our little state, recounting what I have seen with my own eyes, and whatever I have been able to extract from authentic histories about certain facts". Ferrich contrasts Appendini's motives and opportunities to his own, claiming that Appendini wrote in hope of a reward from the Senate (to which he had dedicated his work) but that as a result "he had to prostitute his pen, most of all in the second volume, in which writers sprout like so many mushrooms". "I on the other hand have had the pleasure and the satisfaction to write with liberty". He then goes on to describe the reaction to his *Periegesis*: "The nobles, the friars, the priests and all the others who were stirred up, the ex-Jesuits etc. have persecuted this work of mine, because it is precisely the reverse of the medal to that by the Piarist [Appendini]. But it is enough for me that some few have sympathized with it". He gleefully identifies particularly provocative passages: "Even having described our friend's Ombla villa [the Sörgo estate in Rijeka Dubrovačka] must have made some people drop dead of fury. But more than anything else, [they were infuriated by] that Konavle eel, which apparently bit them more cruelly than a serpent". Ferrich breaks off his letter with the comment that he was suffering from a renewed difficulty with urination, and sends his thanks for some "excellent eyeglasses" (he was a month short of 65 at the time of writing). He ends by asking "Will we have peace, or war?" We have no record of Raicevich's reply.

Why was Ferrich so irritated by Appendini and his *Notizie*? Francesco Maria Appendini had come to Ragusa from his native Italy some 10 years earlier, to take up a position as a teacher of rhetoric at the *Collegium Ragusinum*, managed by the Piarist order after the dissolution of the Jesuits in 1773. He was a prolific writer: Ragusan literary compendia show him prepared to contribute appropriate verses for any public occasion. His *Notizie istorico-critiche sulle antichità, storia e letteratura de' Ragusei* is an enormous work on the early history of the Republic, its contemporary customs, and its literary production. It emerged much later that sections of Appendini's text had been lifted from other sources,¹⁵ but it was not this that bothered Ferrich—indeed, he himself relied heavily on the same works without always giving the full details of his sources. Instead, as his letter specifies, Ferrich was infuriated by Appendini's inaccurate and

¹⁵ J. Bersa, *Dubrovačke slike i prilike*: pp. 100–102, citing Petar Kasandrić, »Franjo Appendini i njegove književne kragje«. *Iskra* (Zadar) 1/15–16, 20 (1891).

incomplete treatment of his subject, and by his “stomach-turning praises”. The book is indeed a rather shapeless and uncritical work. Appendini comes across as something of a Piarist Pangloss as far as Ragusa is concerned: everything is for the best in this, the best of all possible states. He eulogizes the Republic, its patrician rulers, its history, its customs, its writers (including Ferrich), and everything else about it. Ferrich also emphasizes Appendini’s foreign origins, as well as his eagerness to please those in power; and he was not the only Ragusan to make a point of this. On the occasion of the publication of Appendini’s *Grammatica della lingua Illirica* (1808), containing his fanciful speculations on the origins of the Illyrian language, the poet Jakov Betondi composed a satirical epigram on his work which apostrophized him as “Italian”, and characterized him as combining “Greek honesty” (*graeca fides*, i.e. none whatsoever) with “Slav rusticity”.¹⁶ But Ragusa’s ruling circles were happy to be flattered by a sycophantic Italian scholar, and were quick to reward him, as Ferrich noted. His later career showed Appendini to be a successful weathervane, dedicating his *Grammar* to Napoleon’s regent Marshal Auguste Marmont, and subsequently composing verses in honour of Ragusa’s Austrian rulers. Ferrich and Appendini, sharing the same small Ragusan literary circle, rubbed along together for many years with no sign of open animosity (unless appointing Appendini as his literary executor—making him responsible for publishing Ferrich’s Latin translation of Raicevich’s *Epistole slovane*—can be construed as a posthumous revenge).¹⁷

However, Ferrich’s description of his *Periegesis* as a rebuttal of Appendini’s *Notizie* allows us to see his travel poem as a polemical ‘counter-travelogue’, one of many such works written in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries by local ‘travelees’ in order to challenge the confident judgements of their own cultures and societies made by foreigners. These range from European polemics, such as the denunciation of Fleuriot’s *Voyage de Figaro en Espagne* (1784) published in 1785 by a ‘veritable Figaro’ (the Count of Aranda),¹⁸ to those from

¹⁶ *Itale, iure doces graecam, Slavamque loquellam/ nam tibi graeca fides, Slavaque rusticitas* and Betondi’s own translation: *Lacmanin se učit stavi/grčki i naški, prem dodoban/on u srcu Grk je pravi/a s slovinski’ s djelim čoban*; »Kad je o. F. M. Appendini štampao svoju gramatiku, neko mu je sastavio distih – podrugljivi«. *Srdj* 4/1-2 (1905): p. 75.

¹⁷ »Elenco delle opere mie da stamparsi«, in: Đ. Ferić, *Slavica poematia Latine reddita*: p. 557. Appendini did not, however, fulfil this request.

¹⁸ [Pedro Pablo Abarca de Bolea, conde de Aranda], *Dénonciation au public, du Voyage d’un soi-disant Figaro en Espagne, par le véritable Figaro*. (London [Paris]: Fournier le jeune, 1785).

even farther afield, such as Thomas Jefferson's *Notes on the State of Virginia* (1785), written to refute Buffon's claims about the degeneracy of the New World. By addressing their defences to an international Republic of Letters, such writers attempted to control the image of their countries presented abroad, though often at the expense of heated exchanges with the original travellers.¹⁹ But unlike most similar polemics, Ferrich's objections were aimed against an ostensibly *favourable* depiction of his native land. An unusual reaction, but not unprecedented: this was also the basis of Giovanni Lovrich's attack on Alberto Fortis's over-idealized picture of the Dalmatian Morlacchi.²⁰

It is not only Ferrich's explicit claim, in his letter to Raicevich, to be writing against Appendini that encourages the interpretation of his *Periegesis* as a counter-travelogue. There is reason to believe that Ferrich was writing in the tradition and under the inspiration of earlier examples of such travel polemics. One of these is Lovrich's *Osservazioni*. Ferrich not only knew this work but also promoted it, mentioning Lovrich's name approvingly in his list of eminent Dalmatian writers in his epistle to Michael Denis, as well as noting the 'polemical strife' that his work provoked.²¹ And he had further reason to be aware of the problematic Dalmatian reception of Lovrich's *Osservazioni*: Alberto Fortis's friend Giulio Bajamonti had demanded that Ferrich remove a positive reference to Lovrich before he (Bajamonti) was prepared to subsidize the printing of Ferrich's epistle discussing Bajamonti's thesis about Homer and Morlach songs.²² Lovrich's polemics may have been "full of juice", according to Ferrich's epistle, but they also had costs.

¹⁹ This essay forms part of a larger study of the phenomenon. M. Calaresu examines similar polemics in a French-Italian context in »Looking for *Virgil's Tomb*: The End of the Grand Tour and the Cosmopolitan Ideal in Europe«, in: *Voyages and visions: towards a cultural history of travel*, ed. Jaś Elsner and Joan-Pau Rubiés. London: Reaktion Books, 1999; see also Lee Alan Dugatkin, *Mr Jefferson and the Giant Moose: Natural History in Early America*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2009, or José Antonio Ferrer Benimeli, *El Conde de Aranda y su defensa de España*. Madrid-Zaragoza: Departamento de Historia contemporánea de la Universidad de Zaragoza, 1972.

²⁰ Wendy Bracewell, »Lovrich's joke: authority, laughter and savage breasts in an 18th-c. travel polemic«. *Études Balkaniques* 47/2-3 (2011): pp. 224-249.

²¹ *Ad clarissimum virum Michaellem Denisium Vindelicum epistola*. Ragusii: Typis Antonii Martecchini, 1824: pp. 5, 14-15.

²² Bajamontijeva pisma, Bajamonti to G. Ferrich, 1 Apr. 1799 (Arhiv Muzeja grada Splita); in Bajamonti's MS, the verses referring to Lovrich are marked '*Qui altri versi*' in the margin, and the published version (*Ad clarissimum virum Julium Bajamontium*: p. 23) indeed substitutes other lines.

But Ferrich may have had another, more immediate model for his approach to polemical writing in Raicevich himself. Raicevich is known to Croatian historiography primarily as the author of book on Wallachia and Moldavia, the fruit of his observations during his time as secretary to Prince Ipsilanti and subsequently as the Habsburg consular agent in Wallachia.²³ What is less well known is that he himself has been identified as one of the authors of an earlier, highly polemical response to a travel book on Wallachia and Moldavia, *Histoire de la Moldavie et de la Valachie* (1777), by the French adventurer Jean-Paul Carra, which was published as an anonymous pamphlet in Vienna in 1779.²⁴ The ascription is supported by echoes of the pamphlet in Raicevich's subsequent book on the Principalities, though Raicevich does not frame his book as an explicit rebuttal of Carra, instead simply giving his own, quite different version of the character and circumstances of the Wallachians and Moldavians. As a result, Raicevich avoided the heated polemics that had drawn Sulzer and a host of others into a vituperative debate about the Romanian Principalities in the last quarter of the eighteenth century.

Ferrich's *Periegesis* has one marked similarity with Raicevich's book, and that is the lofty refusal to dignify an adversary's works by mentioning them explicitly in their counter-travelogues. Raicevich's *Osservazioni storiche naturali e politiche intorno la Valachia e Moldavia* (1788) can stand alone, without any knowledge of its hidden intertext, just as Ferrich's travel poem makes no open reference to Appendini's *Notizie*, though the picture it paints can stand as its mirror image. Ferrich makes no mention of a possible parallel between Raicevich's *Osservazioni* and his own *Periegesis* in his letter to his old schoolmate, though he would have had no need to refer to Raicevich's career as a polemicist, given their close friendship over many years. Perhaps, too, the very act of admitting

²³ F. Guida, »Un libro 'italiano' sui paesi romeni alla fine del settecento«: pp. 344-365.

²⁴ A. Ciorănescu, »Le Serdar Gherghe Saul et sa polémique avec J.L. Carra«: *Societas Academica Daco-Romana. Acta historica* 5 (1966): pp. 33-71, including the pamphlet's text; a brief analysis and round-up of the literature in Alex Drace-Francis, *The Traditions of Invention: Romanian Ethnic and Social Stereotypes in Historical Context*. Leiden: Brill, 2013, pp. 122-125. A rival for Habsburg favour, Franz Josef Sulzer, identified Raicevich as the main person responsible for this counterblast, guardedly and ambiguously at first, in his *Geschichte des Transalpinen Daciens*, 3 vols., Wien: Gräffer, 1781-1782, then much more explicitly in his *Altes und neues oder dessen litteralische (sic) Reise durch Siebenbürgen*, etc. Ulm: n.p., 1782, published after he had lost the post of Habsburg agent to Raicevich. Sulzer's disappointment seems to have emboldened him to identify Raicevich directly, though we cannot conclude from this that Raicevich was the sole author of the pamphlet (earlier Sulzer had also named a second collaborator, while Carra named a Moldavian official, Gherghe Saul).

to Raicevich the ticklish fact of Ferrich's own polemic against such an officially lauded figure as Appendini indicates his awareness of Raicevich's prior involvement in such an exchange.²⁵ Finally, it is worth noting one occasion when these three works—Raicevich's, Ferrich's, and Appendini's—appeared in the same context. When Ferrich's acquaintance in Zagreb, Adam Aloisius Barichevich, wrote in 1804 asking for information about a literary history being planned in Ragusa, Ferrich responded with the information that this was Appendini's *Notizie*, adding no further comment. Instead, Ferrich added the news that he had published his own *Periegesis*, and enclosed a copy—together with a copy of Raicevich's *Osservazioni*.²⁶ He left Barichevich, along with other readers of these works, to draw their own conclusions.

However, when one reads the *Periegesis* in the light of Ferrich's letter to Raicevich, its character as critique of Appendini's work is not immediately obvious. The manner in which the poem was written in sections, over a period of time, militates against it being *composed* in response to Appendini (as does its publication in the same year as Appendini's second volume), though it may well have been put in order and *published* at this prompt. The only direct mention of the Piarist's work in the poem is a footnote noting the author's pleasure at hearing an elegy by the Croatian humanist Aelius Lampridius Cervinus (Cerva), which Ferrich describes as soon to be published by Appendini.²⁷ Nor does the structure or content of the *Periegesis* correspond closely to that of Appendini's *Notizie*, as is so often the case in other travel polemics written to rebut error. While Appendini sets out the origins of the city, its ecclesiastical and civil history, and a chronology of important events up to 1699, followed by a survey of Ragusan authors in his second volume, Ferrich's topographical approach leads to a much looser anecdotal treatment, apart from the concluding *prosopopeia* which gives a chronological, if selective, account of Ragusan history. Appendini does not obviously belong among those travel writers whom Ferrich criticizes in his introductory comments (Ferrich does not specifically

²⁵ I owe this entirely plausible speculation to Neven Jovanović.

²⁶ See Nikola Pribić, *Studien zum literarischen Spätbarock in Binnenkroatien: Adam Aloisius Baričević*. München: R. Oldenbourg, 1961: pp. 141-142 and Željko Puratić, »Iz korespondencije hrvatskog latinista Đure Ferića (1739-1820) sa Adamom A. Baričevićem (1756-1806) i Dživom Bizzaro (1782-1833)«, *Živa antika* 23/2 (1973): pp. 366-372.

²⁷ *Periegesis*, cli. This did indeed appear in Appendini's second volume in 1803, which suggests that Ferrich's poem may have been published *before* this volume, while his letter to Raicevich was written afterwards. But Ferrich may equally well have failed to edit his manuscript to bring it up to date before publication.

censure those who write in hope of a reward, for example), though the contrasts Ferrich sets up—love of *patria* vs love of praise, a focus on domestic sights vs foreign lands, a critical perspective on vices and virtues vs ‘inconsistencies about a nation’—might well characterize his view of the contrast between his work and Appendini’s.

Nonetheless, there are two obvious ways in which Ferrich’s *Periegesis* revises Appendini’s work: in its scope and its treatment of Ragusan history. Ferrich’s focus on Ragusa’s territories beyond the city walls radically reverses Appendini’s emphasis. Ferrich shifts the Republic’s possessions out of Appendini’s footnotes to treat them on their own terms, as places with their own history, while at the same time demonstrating the network of historical, social and economic ties that bound together the city and its hinterland. These range from the circumstances that brought particular places under Ragusan rule, to the different kinds of produce sent to its market from far-scattered fields; from the influence of country wet-nurses on patrician children, to the degrees of ‘cultivation’ brought about by intercourse between the city and its rural dependencies. Ferrich’s city is far from self-contained or self-sufficient: it is vulnerable in that it depends on its subjects for everything from food or wine to frontier defences. Ferrich’s *prosopopeia*, too, is not just a briefer and clearer account of Ragusa’s history, but it takes the story up to the present day, while Appendini had closed his account with the diplomatic successes of the previous century, avoiding any mention of the political and diplomatic difficulties of the recent past. Ferrich, however, details the ‘anarchy’ that resulted from patrician factionalism in 1763, raising the possibility of a plebeian Spartacus taking advantage of these conflicts yet praising the citizens for preserving calm while the warring patricians settled their differences (clxxiv). His political narrative becomes sketchier towards the end of the century (he does not explicitly discuss the 1799 peasant rebellion in Konavle, for instance, though as we shall see, he hints at it.) But he assesses the economic and social costs of Dubrovnik’s eighteenth-century shipping boom, from a “new tribute to the Turks” as the price of entry to the Black Sea to the influx of foreign luxuries, “the corruptor of customs” (clxxv), while the foreign war-frigates that dropped anchor off the Ragusan coasts appear more than once in his descriptions.

As this suggests, Ferrich makes good on his claim to be a more critical observer than Appendini, balancing the Italian’s praise and, in particular, indicating ways in which Ragusa had declined from its former glory. Ferrich does not hesitate to comment when he sees things that disturb him. These are

not just private social ills (luxury, idleness, superstition, immorality), but also public failings. It is not the case, as has been claimed, that he shows no 'state consciousness'.²⁸ In Ston, he warns that the harbour will silt up entirely "if public care does not oppose to this evil some quick remedy" (xciv), while he notes with appreciation irrigation canals in Konavle and mills in Šumet being improved "by the public care", "with no sluggish zeal" (xxiv, xlvi), or a new bridge to make travel easier in Župa, "erected with much money and a huge arch" (xxxiii). He does not hesitate to describe the Jesuits as gripped by their "insatiable desire for power" (lxii), to criticize Ragusan gourmards for driving up the cost of choice fish regardless of official price regulations (li); or to point out that where once Orašac manned twenty ships of its own, now foreign warships moor off its cliffs (lviii). Ferrich's harshest criticisms of the social system come on Lastovo, where he denounces the fact that priests work patrician landholdings for wages ("God... has decreed that you should plough other fields"), or the way that the Lastovo nobles sit in judgement together with the rector while those whose names do not appear in the tables of nobility are excluded, though both groups are equally unlearned and coarse (cxiv). However, he also portrays warm relations between urban households and their rural servants (xxxiv-xxxv). His final peroration, delivered in the person of Ragusa herself, is a classic example of republican moralizing, lamenting the decline of patriotism, social concord, love of labour and "golden simplicity, content with little", but also addressing all of Ragusa's inhabitants in arguing that it is these, rather than wealth or fortifications, that will protect and support the city (clxxvi). Ferrich's Ragusa is recognizably the same place as that described by Appendini, but while it is a profoundly affectionate portrait, the artist makes sure to include the warts.

For the most part Ferrich allows his readers to draw their own conclusions from his descriptions and anecdotes. But though his travel poem was not overtly polemical in tone, it provoked a response that helps set it into context. This took the form of a long versified reply to the *Periegesis* written in Croatian by Marin Dominkov Zlatarich.²⁹ Zlatarich (1753-1826), was a Dominican, then a

²⁸ I. Pederin, »Đuro Ferić kao pjesnik hrvatskih fiziokrata: p. 237.

²⁹ MS 918, 274-95 (*Dum Gjuru Ferriču, pisaozu ruxne Periegesi*), Znanstvena knjižnica, Dubrovnik; my thanks to Lovro Kunčević for copying this MS. Selections from Zlatarich's poem have been published and discussed by Slavica Stojan, »Mizoginija i hrvatski pisci 18. stoljeća u Dubrovniku«, *Analiza Zavoda za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Dubrovniku* 39 (2001): pp. 427-460, and by Lahorka Plejić Poje, *Zaman će svaki trud. Ranonovovjekovna satira na hrvatskom jeziku u Dubrovniku*. Zagreb: Disput, 2012.

secular clergyman, and from 1776 a member of the Ragusan ruling body. He was a member of a 'new' patrician house granted nobility in the seventeenth century, and seems to have held aloof from existing patrician political divisions.³⁰ (Zlatarich's name is left unassigned in a table of patrician political allegiances, appropriately enough sketched out on the endpapers of a copy of Ferrich's *Periegesis* owned by the patrician Mato Pozza, as though reading the book had prompted thoughts of Ragusan political divisions).³¹ His poem, preserved in manuscript, is a vigorous denunciation of Ferrich and his account, promising that Zlatarich will dispute all that is "crazy, bold and deceitful" in the *Periegesis*, "as things of no value to the state of Dubrovnik" (*kako od stvari nijedne zjene, Dubrovackoj od Darxavi*, p. 277). Its date is unclear, but it was almost certainly composed after the publication of the *Periegesis* (since it refers to corrections that Ferrich made to his earlier text for publication, such as the changes wrought on Cavtat girls by foreign influence; p. 282) and circulated before Ferrich's 1804 letter to Raicevich (given the way that this letter reflects some of Zlatarich's sharpest passages).

The title, »To Dum Gjuro Ferrich, author of the nasty *Periegesis*«, hints at the tone of the whole. Zlatarich addresses Ferrich directly, denouncing him and his poem vigorously, personally, and abusively (calling on Pegasus to piss on Ferrich from Parnassus, for instance). There appears to have been personal friction between the two men: one of Ferrich's sardonic epigrams explains Zlatarich's nickname of *Mačak* (Tomcat) as referring to his habit of prowling Ragusa's rooftops in order to creep in through the dormer windows of serving girls who attracted him.³² There is a hint of defensiveness in some of Zlatarich's rebuttals, perhaps also explaining his focus on the section of the *Periegesis* dealing with Cavtat, Župa and Konavle, where the Zlatarich family owned land and Marin had served as a state official. Much of what he finds to correct is petty and carping, as with many such polemics (Ferrich is a mere versifier, not a poet; not all travellers lie all the time; Šumet is not a particularly pleasant place; there are no olive trees growing on Lokrum; the quality of the water that flows from a certain spring, the money local girls make from carrying it, and the Latin term Ferrich uses to describe it; and so on). Zlatarich the Tomcat also accuses Ferrich of slandering the morals and character of the women of

³⁰ For Zlatarich, see Irena Bratičević, »Epigrami Marina Zlatarića«, in: *Perivoj od slave: zbornik Dunje Fališevac*, ed. Davor Dukić et al. Zagreb: FF-press, 2012: pp. 43-52.

³¹ Vid Vuletić Vukasović, »Bilješke o strankama u Dubrovniku početkom XIX. vijeka«. *Srd* 7 (1908) [= Spomenica o padu dubrovačke republike]: pp. 108-110.

³² Vladimir Gortan, *Hrvatski latinisti*, vol. 2. Zagreb: Nakladni zavod Matice hrvatske, 1970: pp. 248-249.

Cavtat, blaming the calumnies of “wanton young men” from the city for their reputation as loose (and their menfolk as jealous, p. 284). But some of Zlatarich's responses help us see more clearly what Ragusans found controversial about the *Periegesis*, particularly in the way that he exaggerates Ferrich's comments, twisting them but at the same time clarifying their import. This is the case with the two episodes Ferrich mentioned in his letter: the eels of Konavle and the Sorgo villa in Rijeka Dubrovačka.

Ferrich had praised the fat eels of Ljuta, and he had followed this up with some advice for the peasants of Konavle: “Bring this [eel] to the lord, that you may please him, o labourer, if you are wise; and dare thereafter things worthy of exile to tiny Gyara and incarceration; you have nothing to fear, let the eloquence of Apicius protect you and yours”: *Hanc domino, ut placeas, fer villice, si sapis; aude / Dein brevibus Gyaris, et carcere digna, timendum / Nil tibi, teque tui facundia servet Apici* (xxiv).³³

Zlatarich seized on this passage, beginning by accusing Ferrich of insulting the nobles and judges of Konavle for secretly accepting bribes from criminals to save them from punishment: “The versifier has berated all the patricians of Konavle, and has known how to insult the judges for their hidden trespasses, as soon as he comes to the eel”: *Od Konavli sve Gospare/Versista je obruxijo, / I skrovite ziech privare / Sudze vrjedit razumijo, Na jegulju čim dohodi* (p. 287). He draws out the full import of Ferrich's remarks—if the peasant takes such an eel to his lord, “even his most deceitful deed will be forgiven him”: *Djelo jošte najhimbeno/Dacje njemu bit prošteno*. He then deflects attention from Ferrich's insinuations of patrician corruption, by taking Ferrich's inflammatory suggestion at face value and suggesting that it would have an apocalyptic effect on Ragusan society. He addresses his concern to an unspecified plural ‘you’: “You open the prisons, you overturn the gallows into the same blood that you pass judgement upon, as soon as that power is conceded, that a criminal deserving of execution bribes justice with that [eel]”: *Vec tamnize rastvorite/ Oborite i vješala/ U karv istu kii sudite/ Cimse taka oblast dala / Da s'tijem slotvor Pravdu miti/ Kije dostojan davjen biti* (287).

Ferrich may have been hinting at a specific episode of bribery, but these comments on exile, prisons and gallows must have reminded Ragusan readers

³³ *Aude dein brevibus Gyaris, et carcere digna* is a paraphrase of Juvenal; see Paul Allen Miller, *Latin Verse Satire: An Anthology and Critical Reader*. Rondon: Routledge, 2005, p. 241 on *carcere dignum* as connoting execution rather than imprisonment.

of the peasant rebellion in Konavle a few years earlier in 1799. The ringleaders of this protest against increased taxes and salt payments were condemned to death, but escaped punishment by a timely flight into exile across the frontier and were never brought to justice. Although their houses were razed and they were hanged in effigy, they subsequently returned to their villages secretly. An inquiry was mounted in 1803, the year Ferrich's *Periegesis* was printed, to investigate why these men had been able to return with impunity.³⁴ We may speculate whether Zlatarich's vehement response here had a personal character: not only had he served on the commission that pronounced sentence on the ringleaders in 1800, but he also served as *knez* of Konavle immediately after the suppression of the revolt. He may well have had an interest in deflecting attention away from his own role (he was certainly also at pains to deny that the palace housing the local count was in any way "commodious", as described by Ferrich).³⁵ In any case, Zlatarich's response shows how Ferrich could conceal a barbed reference to recent events in a relatively innocuous verse.

But Zlatarich's attack in this passage was directed not just at Ferrich, but also at unspecified others. Whom did he have in mind? Perhaps men such as Tomo Bassegli, patrician and enlightened reformer, who blamed the Konavle uprising on the "feudal tyranny" of patrician landowners, and who was repeatedly defeated in elections for Rector in the course of the conflict in favour of candidates from the 'strong hand' party.³⁶ Ferrich had taught the young Bassegli, and both men were associated with a wider circle of like-minded Ragusans. Zlatarich's attitude towards these men emerges from the second passage, on the Sorgo villa, in which the poet makes dark insinuations about its owner and the people who gathered there. These were the friends of Miho Sorgo (1739-1796) and his nephew Antun (1775-1841), who espoused ideas of political and cultural innovation, to the dismay of Ragusa's more conservative ruling circles.³⁷ In 1793-1794,

³⁴ Stjepan Antoljak, »Konavoska buna u središtu jednog dijela evropske diplomacije«, *Rad JAZU* 286 (1952): pp. 107-141. On the inquiry of 1803, Vesna Miović-Perić, »Jedna istraga o vodjama konavoske bune 1799.«, *Dubrovački horizonti* 25/35 (1995): pp. 75-77.

³⁵ Matteo Zamagna, *Storia di Ragusa*. Trieste: Soc. editrice mutilati e combattenti, 1935: pp. 276-277; Stjepan Antoljak, *Bune pučana i seljaka u Hrvatskoj*. Zagreb: Matica hrvatska, 1956: p. 100; Zdravko Šundrica, *Tajna kutija dubrovačkog arhiva*, vol. 1. Zagreb-Dubrovnik: Zavod za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Dubrovniku, 2008: p. 408.

³⁶ Žarko Muljačić, *Tomo Basiljević-Baselji*. Beograd: Naučno delo, 1958: taught by Ferrich, 9; as candidate for Rector in 1799, 44; thoughts on Konavle rebellion, 90.

³⁷ Rudolf Maixner, »O akademiji Miha Sorkočevića«, *Grada za povijest književnosti hrvatske* 23 (1952): pp. 57-67. Raicevich was linked with this circle as well: Bassegli had asked him to contribute a paper to the proceedings of the society; Žarko Muljačić, »Dva priloga povijesti dubrovačkih akademija«, *Radovi Instituta JAZU u Zadru* 4-5 (1959): p. 328.

shortly before departing for revolutionary France, where he died, Miho Sorgo had organized a 'patriotic society', meeting in his villa to follow news of progress abroad and to promote enlightened reform in Ragusan society and politics. Members included both patricians and citizens, brought together by a common interest in literature and philosophy. However, as Sorgo bitterly recorded, the society had been "suppressed disgracefully, due to the malignity of perverse times, which can denigrate, accuse and render suspect even virtuous institutions".³⁸ Some of those who were members of this circle—Tomo Bassegli, Antun Sorgo, Ferrich himself—were also among the alleged 'Jacobins' identified in the Senate's investigation some years later in 1797-1798.³⁹ It is clear that this group had a reputation among the more conservative patricians as dangerous malcontents.

In his *Periegesis*, Ferrich had praised Sorgo's as the most beautiful of all the villas that lined the banks of the Ombla, mentioning in passing the frescoes that decorated its loggia (xlix). These murals, painted around 1700, depicted scenes from mythology: the judgement of Paris, the death of Adonis, Heracles at the crossroads, Venus and Mars, Odysseus and the sirens, Minerva and Neptune, and so on. Vladimir Marković has shown how these decorations projected the villa and its owner into an imagined classical Arcadia, linking the mythical and the real, the painted representations of antiquity and their living imitators.⁴⁰ Commenting on Ferrich's passage, Zlatarich equally blurred the distinction between the paintings and the friends who gathered in the villa: "In Sorgo's house, near the river, there are to be seen in the atrium some monsters who terrify everyone": *Sorga u kuci, gdje kraj rjeke, /Kê svakomu straha cine, /Dvorištemse vidu njeke/ Gardobštine* (p. 292). Zlatarich implied that these 'monsters' were the troublemakers who gathered there—"Not bearing images of people but rather those whom gloomy Hades holds": *Neimajuci slike od Ljudii /Neg što uzdarxi Pako tmasti* (p. 293), and that Sorgo himself was a

³⁸ R. Maixner, »O akademiji Miha Sorkočevića«: p. 62. See also T. Chersa, *Della vita e delle opere di monsignore Giorgio Ferrich*: p. 38, on Ferrich's role in initiating the society, and its dissolution as a result of 'envious ignorance'.

³⁹ Ž. Muljačić, »Istraga protiv jakobinaca 1797. god. u Dubrovniku«: pp. 235-252. Bassegli and another member of the Sorgo family had also been among those whom Zlatarich had inculpated in sexual and religious scandal in an official inquiry in 1776: Đuro Körbler, »'Zanovićeve škole' u Dubrovniku«, *Građa za povijest književnosti Hrvatske* 7 (1912): pp. 1-48.

⁴⁰ Vladimir Marković, »Mit i povijest na zidnim slikama u Sorkočevićevu ljetnikovcu u Rijeci Dubrovačkoj«, *Prilozi povijesti umjetnosti u Dalmaciji* 21 (1980) [= *Fiskovićev zbornik*, vol. 1]: pp. 490-514.

“black Pluto”, “condemning them to ruin”. Anyone could see that they were not living images (*xive slike*), but nuisances: *Ali kêsu svak videtcje / Neprilike* (293)—cleverly playing on the usual phrase ‘*slika i prilika*’ (a living image or embodiment). Zlatarich made the frescoes function as an allegory of the moral and political dangers posed by this circle of free-thinkers—and a warning about the ideas contained in Ferrich’s text. “Even mentioning our friend’s Ombla villa”, as Ferrich noted in his letter to Raicevich, was enough to make patricians such as Zlatarich “drop dead of fury”.

Zlatarich’s exposé is by no means an objective reading of the *Periegesis*. In places it crudely misrepresents Ferrich’s words. He roundly denies that a few Italian brides have improved the graces of the women of Cavtat; takes Ferrich to task for questioning the efficacy of sailors’ vows to the Virgin, and God’s providence; defends the men of Vitaljina, who have the right to carry small arms into the city, but are scarcely bellicose; minimizes the size and cost of the bridge in Župa that Ferrich had praised; contests Ferrich’s interpretation of an anecdote about the people of Rijeka Dubrovačka—that when a crucifix fell into the sea they shouted that if this was the true God he could swim out by himself—and chides Ferrich for deliberately confusing sacred and secular things; and interprets Ferrich’s comments about the official price of fish and the adjustment of market scales as meddling with the authority of state and rousing commoners to rebellion. Zlatarich ends with a severe warning against agitation against the state (‘Jacobinism?’): “it is not the time to stir up the commoners against your Ruler; this is something you could have turned over in your mind a little earlier”: *Poglavizi suproc tvomu/Puk buniti vrijeme nije,/ Tosi u umu mogo tvomu/Mislit prije* (295).

In short, the general picture painted by Zlatarich is that Ferrich is malicious, irreligious and unpatriotic, if not out-and-out crazy, and his *Periegesis* is an incendiary, rabble-rousing tract. This last accusation seems extreme, especially for a poem written in Latin hexameter. This was hardly the most direct way to target the Ragusan mob. But even if Zlatarich’s rebuttal is a distorting mirror, reflecting an exaggerated and tendentious image of Ferrich, it still helps us glimpse some of the tensions that had shaped the *Periegesis* and its reception. Underpinning Zlatarich’s satire—just as with official unease over Sorgo’s ‘academy’—was a different interpretation of ‘patriotism’ and what was right for Ragusa, beyond any personal animosity. This comes out in Zlatarich’s angry rebuttal of Ferrich’s claim that the *Periegesis* celebrates his *patria*. Zlatarich sees the poem instead as an attack on the Ragusan state, its patrician elite, and

its loyal citizens and subjects, and polemicizes against it on that basis. Interestingly, however, Zlatarich does *not* present the *Periegesis* as an attack on Appendini, the historian who celebrated Ragusa's ruling class as the perfect embodiment of the Ragusan state. Zlatarich's failure to exploit this aspect of Ferrich's poem (which might have given him the opportunity to characterize Ferrich as envious, as well as greedy, proud, shameless, and untruthful), as well as the silence on this matter among commentators such as Chersa, all hint that Appendini's role as the prompt for Ferrich's poem may not have been common knowledge in Ragusa.

These juxtapositions—with earlier travel polemics and with Zlatarich's response—allow us to appreciate Ferrich's *Periegesis* as a *discreet* polemic, if that is not an oxymoron. Perhaps we should interpret *Periegesis* as a text that is addressed in two different directions simultaneously. On the one hand, it allowed Ferrich to needle Ragusan readers with a sly critique of contemporary morals, manners and political life. Decoding a message phrased in poetic form posed no problem to this audience, which was well versed in satirical communication, as Lahorka Plejić Poje has demonstrated.⁴¹ Ferrich's letter to Raicevich shows him deriving a certain relish from stirring up “the nobles, the friars, the priests and all the others”. On the other hand, Ferrich could address his *Periegesis* to a wider European Republic of Letters, providing a nuanced counterweight to the vision of Ragusa promoted by Appendini. Ferrich's footnotes, most of which assume an audience unfamiliar with Ragusan circumstances and with the ‘Illyrian’ language, suggest this assumed readership. So does the choice of Latin which, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, was still a prestigious *lingua franca* for Europe's educated elite. Here, however, Ferrich's poetic treatment of Ragusan realities (as well as the allusive nature of his barbs) hid the dirtiest domestic linen from foreign view.

How successful was he in these tactics? Zlatarich's satire shows that the *Periegesis* hit a nerve with his Ragusan audience. The subsequent readings by Chersa and Casali, discussed above, demonstrate an ambiguous attitude towards the poem (perhaps influenced by Zlatarich's hostile paraphrases). But Ferrich's choice of Latin verse meant that his sarcastic, witty, affectionate picture of Ragusa did not remain a living part of Dubrovnik's memory, as use of the language declined.⁴² The foreign reception of the *Periegesis* was much warmer,

⁴¹ L. Plejić Poje, *Zaman će svaki trud*.

⁴² Ivan Stojanović, writing at the end of the nineteenth century, described the *Periegesis* as the best description of Ragusa's villages, but regretted that its Latin meant it was no longer read for pleasure; Johann Christian von Engel and Ivan Stojanović, *Povjest Dubrovačke republike*. Dubrovnik: Srpska dubrovačka štamparija A. Pasarića, 1903: p. 297.

with nothing to suggest that readers abroad noted Ferrich's coded critiques. Melchior Cesarotti, the Italian translator of *Ossian*, praised it in a personal letter to Ferrich as "a new sort of geographical map" —that is, a literary one—"issuing from the presses of Parnassus. By its means Ragusa will become better known to foreigners, and its image will be more distinct and no less appreciated than the reality, for those who are able to use the eyes of the soul".⁴³ We know that it was read by foreign travellers as a guide to Ragusa: the French traveller Pouqueville cites it, for example, in describing Župa, and the festivities on St Blaise's day. Pouqueville disdained Ragusa for its old-fashioned pomposity and pride, but did not arrive at this opinion by way of the *Periegesis*.⁴⁴ The book made its way into the libraries of a number of other travellers in the region: Gardiner Wilkinson, Frederick North, Earl of Guilford, and Arthur Evans, for instance.⁴⁵ But it seems doubtful that it was understood as a counter to Appendini, who was accepted as an authoritative source on Ragusa, and cited much more frequently than Ferrich. It is true that Johannes von Müller revised his initial enthusiastic impression of Appendini's work between first reading it in 1803 and reviewing it in 1806 in the *Jenaische Allgemeine Literatur-Zeitung*, where he chided Appendini for suppressing the later history of the Republic. But it was not the *Periegesis* that prompted this rethink: Müller had already complained about Appendini's *scrupule politique* in similar terms in a letter of 1803, before he received Ferrich's gift.⁴⁶ As Cesarotti's praise suggests, Ferrich's Latin verse meant that the *Periegesis* was valued abroad more for its aesthetic value than for its informational content, much less its debunking of the myth of an ideal patrician republic. To this extent, Ferrich's discreet tactics perhaps had less effect in correcting Appendini's version for a foreign audience than noisy polemics might have done, while nonetheless still attracting Ragusan animus.

In the last lines of the *Periegesis*, Ferrich has "small" Ragusa apologize for singing of "trifling matters" in the face of war between France and Britain for dominion of the globe. Perhaps I should be equally abashed for this attempt to

⁴³ Đ. Ferić, *Slavica poematia Latine reddita*: pp. 520-21.

⁴⁴ *Voyage dans la Grèce*, vol. 1. Paris: Firmin Didot, 1826: pp. 10, 38-39.

⁴⁵ Calke Abbey library catalogue; Guilford Papers, British Library; SSEES Library.

⁴⁶ Johannes von Müller, *Sämmtliche Werke*, vol. 7. Tübingen: In der J.G. Cotta'schen Buchhandlung, 1812: p. 69 (letter, 1803); vol. 11 (1811): pp. 135-150 (review); for his letter of July 1803, see Werner G. Zimmermann, »Johannes von Müller und Ragusa«, in: Johannes von Müller, *Geschichtsschreiber der Goethezeit*, ed. Christoph Jamme and Otto Pöggeler. Schaffhausen: P. Meili, 1986: p. 87.

disentangle long-forgotten Ragusan literary quarrels. But scale does not always set the criteria of significance. Ferrich's Ragusa was indeed a tiny polity, soon to disappear as an independent entity. But Ferrich's irritation at seeing his native land misrepresented by a foreigner, whose descriptions and conclusions were accorded unquestioned authority, was not unique. Nor was his dilemma in composing his own account: how to write equally effectively for both a native and a foreign audience. Ferrich's *Periegesis* offers an instructive example of the motives of such a writer, and of one way of constructing a counter-travelogue, while its reception raises the issue of the successes and failures of such an approach. Set into a larger context, these "trifling matters" become part of the much larger story of struggles over discursive authority in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Europe, and the difficult choices which local authors faced in attempting to challenge the confident characterizations made by foreign observers.

Appendix:

Gjuro Ferrich to Stefan Raicevich, 8 May 1804
(OTM hs. 119 Cd, Amsterdam University Library, Special Collections)⁴⁷

Ragusa li 8 Maggio 1804

Aspetto con impazienza qualche vostra lettera, e il cuore mi dice che non è lontano il momento per riceverla. L'ultima che vi scrissi l'avevo dato al Sig[no]re Antonio Sorgo pregandolo ad acchiderla con le sue, il che mi si esibì con somma gentilezza. Il Sig[no]re Andro Altesti vi consegnerà un mio Involtino per voi, nel quale troverete alcune copie della mia Periegesi, della quale v'ho parlato nell'ultima mia. Se ne vorreste dell'altre, m'accennerete in seguito. Favorirete di dar una copia all'eccellente nostro amico il Sig[no]re Miller, che Andro mi dice, che si aspetta a Vienna. Suppongo dalla Svizzera, perche il viaggio in Italia, del quale mi parlò nell'ultima, che mi scrisse pare che non l'abbia effettuato. Cosa direte voi di questo mio lavoro da me in pochi mesi

⁴⁷ The letter is an autograph, matching other examples of Ferrich's neat hand (his correspondence with Bajamonti, for instance, in the Archive of the Split Museum). Here I have transcribed the text without corrections. Abbreviations have been filled in, however, and the emendations marked with square brackets.

concepito ed eseguito? Lasciate però prima che io vene dica qualche cosa. Sapete, cosa m'ha indotto a ciò fare? Il forestiere, che ha scritto la nostra Storia, e che l'ha sfigurata in maniera che ha gettato maggiori tenebre sopra cose, che pretendeva di schiarire. Di più ha fatto un pasticcio e confusion di cose, che fra le molte menzogne, che ha dette fa dubitare anche di quell poco di vero, che si ritrova, prima perche esagerato al sommo, e poi corrotto da stomachevoli adulazioni. Io che non mi sentivo in forze di far quel che ha fatto il Frate, cioè scriver una Storia del n[ost]ro paese, ho voluto contraporre qualche cosa ai suoi 2. Tomi in quarto, ove ho accennato i principali avvenimenti dalla prima fondazione fino ai tempi presenti, senza aver omessa alcuna delle principali epoche. Ho fatto poi una scorsa per tutti i luoghi del n[ost]ro picciolo stato, dicendo quello che ho veduto con i miei occhi, e qualche potevo ricavare da storie autentiche circa alcuni fatti. L'Appendini scrivea con fine di buscar qualche cosa dal Pubblico, al quale dedico la sua opera, ed è riuscito avendogli regalato 200 Pezze Col[lonari]e. Ma ha dovuto prostituire la sua penna, massime nel secondo Tomo, nel quale spuntano i letterati come tanti funghi. So che riderete, se avrete la pazienza di leggerlo: ma credo, che non vorrete buttare il v[ost]ro tempo. Io al contrario ho avuto il piacere, e la sodisfaz[ion]e di scrivere con libertà. Ma che è seguito? Velo dirò in poche parole. La Nobilità, i Frati, i Preti e tutti li altri ch' erano messi sù, gli Ex-gesuiti etc. hanno perseguitato la mia opera, perche appunto è il rovescio della medaglia di quella dello Scolopio. A me però basta che alcuni pochi l'abbian compatita. Perfino l'aver descritto il casino d'Ombra del n[ost]ro amico ha dovuto far creppar di rabbia alcuni. Più d'ogni altra cosa p[er]ò quell'anguilla Canalese, che pare gli abbia più fiera[m]ent]e morsicato d'una serpe. Leggete, e poi mi direte il v[ost]ro sentimento. Io non m'estendo di più per la fresca convalescenza d'una graviss[im]a malattia che ho sofferto, e dalla q[ua]le ancora non mi sono ben rimesso, cioè dalla difficoltà dell'orina che doppo 13 anni di nuovo m'ha assalito. Vi ringrazio bel nuovo agli eccellenti occhiali, che m'avete favorito. Come va il mondo? Avrem pace, o guerra? Amatemi, come io sinceram[en]te vi amo, e crediatemi tutto v[ost]ro

G. Ferrich

Ragusa li 8 Maggio 1804. *1794*

A.C.

Aspetto con impazienza qualche vostra lettera, e il cuore mi dice che non è lontano il momento per riceverla. L'ultima che vi scrissi l'avevo dato al Sig. Antonio Torgo pregandolo ad occluderla con la sua, il che mi si esibì con somma gentilezza. Il Sig. Andro albrici vi consegnerà un mio involtino per voi, nel quale troverete alcune copie della mia *Periegesis*, della quale v'ho parlato nell'ultima mia. Se ne vorreste dell'altra, m'accennerete in seguito. Favorete di dar una copia all'eccellente nostro amico il Sig. Miller, che Andro mi dice, che si aspetta a Vienna. Suppongo dalla Svizzera, perché il viaggio in Italia, del quale mi parlò nell'ultima, che mi scrisse fare che non s'abbia effettuato. Cosa direte voi di questo mio lavoro da me in pochi mesi concepito ed eseguito? Lasciate però prima che io vena dica qualche cosa. Sapete, cosa m'ha indotto a ciò fare? Il forestiere, che ha scritto la nostra storia, che l'ha sfigurata in maniera, che ha gettato maggiori tenebre sopra cose, che pretende di schiarire, ~~di più~~ ha fatto un pasticcio e confusione di cose, che tra le molte menzogne, che ha dette fa dubitare anche di quel poco di vero, che si ritrova, prima perché esagerato al sommo, e poi corrotto da stomachiche adulazioni. Io che non mi sentiva forse di far qualche, ha fatto il drate, cioè scriver una storia del mio paese, ho voluto contrapporre qualche cosa ai suoi 2. Tomi in quarto, ove ho accennato i principj li avvenimenti dalla prima fondazione fino ai tempi presenti, senza aver omessa alcuna delle principali epoche. Ho fatto poi una scorsa per tutti i luoghi del mio piccolo stato, dicendo quello che ho veduto con i miei occhi, e qualche potere ricavare da storie antiche circa alcuni fatti. L'appenimi scrivo con fine di buscar qualche cosa dal Pubblico, al quale dedico la mia opera, ed è riuscito antilogico rigalarlo con belle cose. Ma ho dovuto prostituir la sua penna, massime nel secondo Tomo, nel quale puntano i letterati come tanti franghi. Io che desidero, se avrete la pazienza di leggerlo: ma credo, che non vorrete leggere il vostro drago. Io al contrario ho avuto il piacere, e la soddisfazione di scrivervi con libertà. Ma che seguito? Volete dir in poche parole. La Nobiltà, i Dotti, i Preti e tutti li altri che erano messi su, gli Ecclesiastici hanno perseguitato la mia opera, perché appunto è il rovescio della medaglia di quella dello *Utopia*. A me però basta che alcuni pochi l'abbian compatita. Persino l'avere discusso il casino d'Ombla del mio amico ha dovuto far cessar di rabbia alcuni. Più d'ogni altra cosa, fu quella angustia ha dovuto far cessar di rabbia alcuni. Più d'ogni altra cosa, fu quella angustia ha dovuto far cessar di rabbia alcuni. Più d'ogni altra cosa, fu quella angustia ha dovuto far cessar di rabbia alcuni.

G. Ferrich

Copy of Ferrich's letter

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